**International Guide Dog Federation (IGDF)**

Company no: 2376162. Registered Charity no: 1062441

**APPLICANT ORGANISATIONS**

**Recognition of Organisations Working Towards Applying for IGDF Membership**

**1. Purpose**

It is a requirement of IGDF membership that organisations meet all IGDF Standards, have produced 10 guide dog teams, have been assessed by an IGDF assessor and have been accredited by the IGDF Board as meeting the minimum member requirements.

Applicant Organisation status is for those organisations who are committed to working towards IGDF membership and currently have at least 1 guide dog team which they are supporting and is working in their country or region. Registration as an Applicant Organisation does not imply IGDF membership, nor compliance with the IGDF standards.

Registering an organisation as an Applicant Organisation enables IGDF to provide guidance in proven operational methods facilitating the process towards successful IGDF membership.

**2. Eligibility**

The Applicant Organisation must:

* Be registered as a legal entity.
* Be developing a guide dog service.
* Have graduated at least 1 guide dog team which has worked for a minimum of one month in the country the organisation is based. A 'team' is a trained partnership of a person who is blind or visually impaired and a guide dog of safe and effective standard. This 'team' can be trained by your organisation or have been trained and provided to your organisation by an IGDF Member Organisation and/or by a Guide Dog Mobility Instructor (GDMI) qualified by an IGDF member organization (“a qualified GDMI”).
* Demonstrate evidence of providing ongoing support to your clients starting from the time the first guide dog team graduates, which includes:
	+ Support by a qualified GDMI in relation to safety & performance. The GDMI can be external to your organization but evidence of providing onsite and/or remote support must be provided in form of a contract/agreement between the Applicant Organization and the GDMI and written reports on support given by the GDMI.
	+ Support and professional health and well-being advise from a qualified veterinarian
* Demonstrate evidence of providing ongoing support to your unqualified trainers and instructors starting from the time the first guide dog enters your own training program, which includes:
	+ Support by a qualified GDMI in relation to assessment of dogs’ suitability for guide work, training methods and final performance standard of the dogs to current IGDF standards. The GDMI can be external to your organization but evidence of providing onsite and/or remote support must be provided in form of a contract/agreement between the Applicant Organization and the GDMI and written reports on support given by the GDMI.
	+ Support and professional health and well-being advice from a qualified veterinarian
* Have a 3-year business plan and a financial plan for continuing sustainability.
* Be actively working towards meeting the IGDF Standards.

**3**. **Benefits**

An Applicant Organisation is eligible to:

* Attend the IGDF biennial Conference.
* Submit a poster and/or present DVD updates on their organisation in a special session at the IGDF biennial Conference.
* Submit an abstract to the Conference Programme Committee for consideration to present at a plenary or workshop session at the IGDF biennial Conference.
* Receive the Visionary journal and E-News newsletter.
* Request to post a job advertisement on the IGDF website.
* Receive developmental assistance from the IGDF through the Development Committee in form of consultations, provision of examples of documents and best practices, facilitating networking and similar. The assistance can in some cases include an onsite visit, which would incur extra costs to the organization (see under 7. Fees).
* Request a letter confirming IGDF Applicant Organisation Status when required for state funding, insurance companies or another purpose considered and approved by IGDF. The letter will have a 12-month validity and is only to be used for the approved purposes.

**4. Limitations**

An Applicant Organisation:

* Is not permitted to use the IGDF logo or, at any time, imply membership or that the Applicant Organisation meets IGDF Standards. If the Applicant Organisation is found in breach of this requirement, its status will be immediately revoked and all IGDF developmental assistance will cease. In this circumstance, fees paid by the Applicant Organisation will not be refunded. The Applicant Organisation will be ineligible to re-apply for Applicant Organisation status, or any other IGDF status, for 2 years.
* Has no IGDF voting rights.
* Cannot nominate any individual nor have a representative stand for any elected IGDF position or committee membership.

**5. Process to Apply to Become an Applicant Organisation**

An organisation wanting to apply to become an Applicant Organisation must complete, in English, the application form available from the IGDF website. [http://www.igdf.org.uk](http://www.igdf.org.uk/)

The organisation must enclose the following documentation:

* Legal entity registration (for non-English speaking countries, the registration documents can be submitted in your language, however, the title and a brief description of these documents is required in English).
* 3 year business plan (in English).
* Financial plan for continuing sustainability (in English).
* Copy of a contract/agreement between the organization and a qualified GDMI on provision of support (onsite and remote) in: dog assessment and dog training if organization trains its own dogs; and in client instruction and guide dog team support (from the time the first guide dog team graduates). (Sensitive information may be blackened out.)
* A total of 30 min of videos for technical evaluation of 1 guide dog team allocated by the organisation. The guide dog team should be working independently, in different areas, on routes familiar to the team. The videos should include: (i) Local home area, (ii) Local shopping location, (iii) Busiest route normally used and (iv) Road crossing(s). The videos should include natural sound, so that the background noise and ideally also the client’s voice commands can be heard. The videos should not be accompanied by music. The videos should be filmed continuously (not edited), wherever possible.
* A brief report (not more than 1 page) on the guide dog team shown in the videos, written by the Instructor working with the team. The report must include the following information:
1. date of the video(s) and report
2. the name of the Instructor and for how many years he / she has been working as an instructor
3. how long have the team worked together
4. the client's vision status
5. is this the client's first guide dog or how many guide dogs has the client had before
6. general description of the team's work and relationship including any particular challenges or considerations on the routes shown or in general, that have been worked on or observed by the Instructor

The client can remain anonymous.

A completed application and the supporting documents should be submitted electronically to enquiries@igdf.org.uk

The Development Committee (DC) will review the application and forward it, with a recommendation, to the IGDF Board for a decision.

A decision will be made by the IGDF Board within 3 months of receiving the application and the IGDF Office will inform the organisation of the outcome.

If the application is successful, the IGDF Office will invoice the organisation for the appropriate fee. Once paid, the IGDF Office will put the organisation in contact with the Development Committee who can assist the organisation to create a development plan to work towards being ready to submit an application for membership.

If the application is unsuccessful the IGDF Office will advise the organisation of the reasons why and what the next steps are.

**6. Maintaining Applicant Organisation Status**

Once an organisation becomes an IGDF Applicant Organisation it is expected to achieve membership status within 5 years. This means the Applicant Organisation must have trained 10 guide dog teams themselves, meet all the IGDF standards and have applied for membership within the 5 years. Extension beyond the 5 years is at the discretion of the IGDF Board, considering advice from the Development Committee.

In order to maintain Applicant Organisation status an organisation is expected, on an annual basis, to demonstrate sufficient progress towards being ready to apply for IGDF Membership.

The requirements to maintain Applicant Organisation status include:

* Being actively engaged in training and placing guide dog / client teams.
* Producing guide dog teams at a steady rate, for example 3 guide dog teams after 2 years, 5 guide dog teams after 3 years, 7 guide dog teams after 4 years and 10 guide dog teams within the 5-year time period.
* Having a qualified IGDF Guide Dog Mobility Instructor (GDMI) providing guidance and support in dog assessment, dog training and client services working in line with current IGDF standards. The GDMI can be external to your organization but evidence of providing onsite and/or remote support must be provided in form of a contract/agreement between the Applicant Organization and the GDMI and written reports on support given by the GDMI.
* The Applicant Organisation’s unqualified GDMIs are being educated in line with the IGDF Standards. The education must come from an IGDF accredited member organization and/or from a qualified GDMI.
* Maintaining a current 3-year business plan, including financial viability, which is available to the Development Committee upon request.
* Responding promptly to IGDF and Development Committee emails and requests for status updates. Failure to respond to 3 reminders in a timely manner will result in Applicant Organisation status being terminated.
* Completing an annual report and check-list of IGDF standards’ requirements, which will be forwarded to you and reviewed by the Development Committee.
* Paying annual fees in a timely manner.
* Not using the IGDF logo or, at any time, implying membership or that the Applicant Organisation meets IGDF Standards.

Failure to maintain sufficient progress towards membership and comply with the above requirements may result in Applicant Organisation status being terminated.

Applicant Organisations which have applied for IGDF membership and are awaiting their first assessment can continue as AOs and receive all AO benefits and access on payment of the annual AO subscription. Organisations in this position do not need to submit an annual return or checklist.

**7. Fees**

An Applicant Organisation will be required to pay an annual fee of £100 (£200 from 1st January 2023) within 30 days from the date of the invoice. The first invoice covers the one-off application cost and the remainder of the calendar year in which AO status is granted. Applicant Organisation status is confirmed upon receipt of payment.

Thereafter, an annual subscription of £200 will be charged and invoiced in January of each year. This must be paid within 30 days from the date of the invoice. This fee may be altered at the Board’s discretion.

Failure to pay will result in the loss of Applicant Organisation status. Should an organisation’s AO status lapse, be terminated, or otherwise end during the course of a year, the organisation shall **not** be eligible for a refund.

An Applicant Organisation may incur costs in case of assistance provided in form of an onsite visit, where internal travel, accommodation and food for the visiting professional appointed by the IGDF will be payable by the Applicant Organization. These costs would be on a case-by-case basis and agreed before any arrangements are made.

**Version Control**

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